



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
District of New Hampshire*

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**MEDIA RELEASE
For Immediate Release
June 24, 2003**

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**NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND HIGH INTENSITY DRUG TRAFFICKING AREA
("NEW ENGLAND HIDTA") TASK FORCE**

SECOND GUILTY PLEA ENTERED IN SALEM MARIJUANA RING CASE

Re: United States v. Arthur Soberon

Concord, New Hampshire -- United States Attorney Tom Colantuono, Drug Enforcement Administration Resident Agent in Charge Leo Ducey, and Salem Police Chief Paul Donovan announced that **Arthur SOBERON**, date of birth of September 14, 1976, of Salem, New Hampshire was convicted today on federal marijuana distribution charges.

Soberon entered a guilty plea before U.S. District Judge Stephen J. McAuliffe to an information charging him with possession with intent to distribute marijuana. Soberon will be sentenced by Judge McAuliffe on September 24, 2003 in U.S. District Court in Concord. Soberon faces a maximum sentence of five years imprisonment.

Soberon was arrested in November, 2003 along with seven others as part of a sting operation conducted by the Drug Enforcement Administration's Northern New England High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area ("New England HIDTA") Task Force and the Salem Police Department. A Criminal Complaint against these individuals, issued by U.S. Magistrate Judge James R. Muirhead on January 22, 2003, alleged that they participated in a conspiracy to distribute over 100 kilos of marijuana in southeastern New Hampshire and northeastern Massachusetts between January, 2000 and November, 2002.

Soberon is the second of the eight to enter a guilty plea. Co-defendant **Jose L. MADERA**, of Methuen, Massachusetts entered a guilty plea to the same charge on June 23, 2003.

U.S. Attorney Colantuono stated, "This multi-defendant case involving interstate marijuana trafficking is a prime example of the effectiveness of New England HIDTA, and the

Northern New England HIDTA Task Force. I will continue to commit federal resources to these efforts.”

The prosecution is being handled by Assistant United States Attorney Joseph N. Laplante, the Lead Attorney for the District of New Hampshire in the New England Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (“New England OCDETF”).